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RADER FISHMAN & GRAUER PLLC			FLYNN, KEVIN H	
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/563,376	TAKEUCHI, EIJI	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	KEVIN FLYNN	3628	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 January 2006.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-25 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-25 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 15-18 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 04 January 2006 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>4 January 2006</u> .	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ .

DETAILED ACTION

Status of Claims

1. This action is in reply to the application filed on 4 January 2006.
2. Claims 1-25 are currently pending and have been examined.

Claim Objections

3. Claims 15-18 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form. Claims 15-18 merely rename the information processing system of claim 1, and therefore do not limit the scope of the claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

4. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.
5. Claims 1-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.
6. Claim 1-19 is rejected as indefinite. The limitation(s) "portion" (e.g. "first stage storing portion", "first information storing portion", etc) is indefinite because it is vague and unclear what a "portion" is and how it can store a page or other information. For the purpose of this examination, the limitation shall be interpreted as a database, processor, or server.

7. Claims 4-5 are rejected as indefinite. The limitation(s) "and/or" are indefinite because it is unclear how the limitations should be included. For the purpose of this examination, the limitation shall be interpreted as either both elements required or only one element required.
8. Claims 15-18 are rejected as indefinite. The linking phrase "constituting" is unclear because it is not commonly used, and therefore is not clear if it should be interpreted as "comprising", "consisting of", "consisting essentially of", etc. For the purpose of this examination, all the interpretations shall be used.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

9. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.
10. Claim 19, 23-25 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. Claims 19 is directed to an "server device", however the body of the claim recites various "portions", which may be merely software. Claims 23-25 are directed towards "programs", but do not include a computer-readable storage medium. Functional descriptive material such as a computer program must be structurally and functionally interrelated with a medium to allow its intended uses to be realized. Accordingly, claims directed to software *per se* are not statutory subject matter. *In re Warmerdam*, 33 F.3d 1354, 1361, 31 USPQ2d 1754, 1760 (Fed. Cir. 1994). See MPEP § 2106.01 for further guidance and discussion on computer-related nonstatutory subject matter.
11. Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. Claim 20 purports to be a "system", however, the body of the claim is directed towards various "steps", which would be proper for a method type claim.
12. Claims 21-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

A claimed process is eligible for patent protection under 35 U.S.C. § 101 if:

"(1) it is tied to a particular machine or apparatus, or (2) it transforms a particular article into a different state or thing. See Benson, 409 U.S. at 70 ('Transformation and reduction of an article 'to a different state or thing' is the clue to the patentability of a process claim that does not include particular machines.'); Diehr, 450 U.S. at 192 (holding that use of mathematical formula in process 'transforming or reducing an article to a different state or thing' constitutes patent-eligible subject matter); see also Flook, 437 U.S. at 589 n.9 ('An argument can be made [that the Supreme] Court has only recognized a process as within the statutory definition when it either was tied to a particular apparatus or operated to change materials to a 'different state or thing''); Cochrane v. Deener, 94 U.S. 780, 788 (1876) ('A process is...an act, or a series of acts, performed upon the subject-matter to be transformed and reduced to a different state or thing.'). A claimed process involving a fundamental principle that uses a particular machine or apparatus would not pre-empt uses of the principle that do not also use the specified machine or apparatus in the manner claimed. And a claimed process that transforms a particular article to a specified different state or thing by applying a fundamental principle would not pre-empt the use of the principle to transform any other article, to transform the same article but in a manner not covered by the claim, or to do anything other than transform the specified article." (*In re Bilski*, 88 USPQ2d 1385, 1391 (Fed. Cir. 2008))

Also noted in *Bilski* is the statement, "Process claim that recites fundamental principle, and that otherwise fails 'machine-or-transformation' test for whether such claim is drawn to patentable subject matter under 35 U.S.C. §101, is not rendered patent eligible by mere field-of-use limitations; another corollary to machine-or-transformation test is that recitation of specific machine or particular transformation of specific article does not transform unpatentable principle into patentable process if recited machine or transformation constitutes mere 'insignificant post-solution activity.'" (*In re Bilski*, 88 USPQ2d 1385, 1385 (Fed. Cir. 2008)) Examples of insignificant post-solution activity include data gathering and outputting. Furthermore, the machine or transformation must impose meaningful limits on the scope of the method claims in order to pass the machine-or-transformation test. Please refer to the USPTO's "Guidance for Examining Process Claims in view of *In re Bilski*" memorandum dated January 7, 2009, http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/pac/dapp/opla/documents/bilski_guidance_memo.pdf.

It is also noted that the mere recitation of a machine in the preamble in a manner such that the machine fails to patentably limit the scope of the claim does not make the claim statutory under 35 U.S.C.

§ 101, as seen in the Board of Patent Appeals Informative Opinion *Ex parte Langemyr et al.* (Appeal 2008-1495), <http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/dcom/bpai/its/fd081495.pdf>.

Claims 21-22 are not tied to a particular machine or apparatus nor do they transform a particular article into a different state or thing, thereby failing the machine-or-transformation test; therefore, claims 21-22 are non-statutory under § 101.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

13. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.
14. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:
 1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
 2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
 3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
 4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.
15. Claim 1-3, 9-10, 15-25 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Block et al. (US 2003/0055689 A1) in view of Kendall et al. (US 2002/0091535 A1).

Claim 1:

Block, as shown, discloses the following limitation(s):

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- *a first travel service server device, a second travel service server device, a travel service arrangement server device and an information terminal* (Block ¶ 0048; Fig. 34. Examiner notes that single or multiple servers may act upon the same information or have separate functions),
- *the first travel service server device comprising:*
- *a first page storing portion that stores a first travel service page, which is a web page relating to the first travel service and including a link to a travel service arrangement page* (Block ¶ 0052, ¶ 0069);
- *a first information storing portion that stores first travel service information, which is information relating to reservation for the first travel service* (Block ¶ 0052, ¶ 0069);
- *a first request receiving portion that receives a first travel service page transmission request, which is a request to transmit the first travel service page, from the information terminal* (Block ¶ 0051); and
- *a first page transmitting portion that transmits the first travel service page to the information terminal if the page transmission request has been received* (Block ¶ 0052, ¶ 0069),
- *the second travel service server device comprising:*
- *a second information storing portion that stores second travel service information, which is information relating to reservation for the second travel service* (Block ¶ 0052, ¶ 0069),
- *the travel service arrangement server device comprising:*
- *an arrangement page storing portion that stores the travel service arrangement page, which is a web page relating to arrangement for reservation for the first and second travel services* (Block ¶¶ 0051-0052, ¶ 0069)

Regarding the limitation:

- *an arrangement page transmitting portion that transmits, to the information terminal, the travel service arrangement page, to which the first travel service page jumps, in response to a jump instruction from the information terminal;*

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Block, in ¶¶ 0051-0052, ¶ 0069 disclose transmitting travel information transmission, but does not specifically disclose a jump instruction. However, Kendall, in at least ¶ 0044 discloses that referral links may be provided to complete travel information booking. It would have been obvious to combine the method of transmitting travel information with the technique of providing a link in order to aid in "trip planning and reservations" (Block ¶ 0048) and "complete the transaction" (Kendall ¶ 0044).

- *a user information receiving portion that receives traveler information, which is information relating to a traveler, and travel duration information, which is information relating to travel duration* (Block ¶ 0050, ¶ 0069. See also Kendall ¶ 0030);
- *a first information acquisition portion that acquires the first travel service information in the first travel service server device based on the traveler information and the travel duration information* (Block ¶¶ 0118-0119);
- *a second information acquisition portion that acquires the second travel service information in the second travel service server device based on the traveler information and the travel duration information* (Block ¶¶ 0118-0119); and
- *an acquired information transmitting portion that transmits the first travel service information acquired by the first information acquisition portion and the second travel service information acquired by the second information acquisition portion* (Block ¶¶ 0118-0119),
- *the information terminal comprising:*
- *an input receiving portion that receives input of the first travel service page transmission request, a jump instruction and user information including the traveler information and the travel duration information* (Block ¶¶ 0051-0052, ¶ 0069, Kendall ¶ 0030 showing reservations and duration, Block ¶ 0050, ¶ 0119 showing traveler information; Kendall ¶ 0044 showing a jump instruction)
- *an information transmitting portion that transmits the first travel service page transmission request to the first travel service server device, transmits the jump instruction to the travel service arrangement server device, and transmits the user information to the travel service arrangement server device* (Block ¶ 0050; Kendall ¶ 0044);

- *an information receiving portion that receives the first travel service page from the first travel service server device, and receives the travel service arrangement page, the first travel service information and the second travel service information from the travel service arrangement server device (Block ¶¶ 0067-0069); and*
- *an information output portion that outputs the first travel service page, the travel service arrangement page, the first travel service information and the second travel service information that have been received by the information receiving portion (Block ¶¶ 0067-0069).*

EXAMINER'S NOTE: The limitations "which is a web page . . .", "which is information . . .", "which is a request . . .", etc., are merely a statement of intended use and is only afforded patentable weight to the extent that it imparts structural limitations on the invention, which are met by the teachings of the prior art, as shown above. Examiner also notes that intended use is present in multiple claims.

Regarding the conditional elements in the claims (e.g. claim 1 recites "if the page request has been received"), they too have been considered. However, Applicants are reminded that optional or conditional elements do not narrow the claims because they can always be omitted. See e.g. MPEP §2106 II C: "Language that suggests or makes optional but does not require steps to be performed or does not limit a claim to a particular structure does not limit the scope of a claim or claim limitation. [Emphasis in original.]" Examiner notes that conditional statements are in multiple claims (e.g. claim 20, 23).

Claims 2, 3:

Block/Kendall, as shown above, discloses the limitations of claim 1. In addition, Block/Kendall also discloses the following limitation(s):

- *wherein the first travel service is a service providing an accommodation (Block ¶ 0069),*
- *wherein the first information storing portion of the first travel service server device stores accommodation information relating to reservation for the accommodation as the first travel*

service information, and wherein the first information acquisition portion comprises (Block ¶ 0069):

- *a room type deciding means that decides a room type of the accommodation based on the traveler information (Block ¶ 0069 showing hotel preferences; See also Kendall ¶ 0038); and*
- *an accommodation information acquisition means that acquires the accommodation information from the first travel service server device, using the travel duration information and the room type as keys (Block ¶ 0069/Kendall ¶ 0030 showing length of stay; Block ¶ 0119 showing use of preferences in booking).*

Examiner notes that Block in ¶ 0052 and ¶ 0069 discloses a plurality of reservation types, and, accordingly, it would have been obvious to include multiple services (i.e. claim 2 directed towards first travel service, claim 3 directed towards second travel service).

Claims 9, 10:

Block/Kendall, as shown above, discloses the limitations of claim 1. In addition, Block also discloses the following limitation(s):

- *wherein the first travel service is a service providing an activity (Block ¶ 0052, ¶ 0069),*
- *wherein the first information storing portion of the first travel service server device stores activity reservation information relating to reservation for the activity as the first travel service information (Block ¶ 0052, ¶ 0069), and*
- *wherein the first information acquisition portion acquires the activity reservation information from the first travel service server device, based on the traveler information and the travel duration information (Block ¶ 0052, ¶ 0069).*

Claims 15-18:

See above rejection of claim 1. Examiner notes that renaming the information processing system of claim 1 does not change the scope of the claims.

Claim 19:

Block/Kendall, as shown, discloses the following limitation(s):

- *a user information receiving portion that receives traveler information, which is information relating to a traveler, and travel duration information, which is information relating to travel duration (Block, ¶ 0052, ¶¶ 0067-0069, showing travel duration (see also Kendall ¶ 0030 showing duration); Block ¶ 0050, ¶¶ 0118-0119 showing traveler information (see also Kendall ¶ 0030 showing traveler information));*
- *a first information acquisition portion that acquires first travel service information, which is information relating to reservation for a first travel service, based on the traveler information and the travel duration information (Block ¶ 0052, ¶¶ 0067-0069);*
- *a second information acquisition portion that acquires second travel service information, which is information relating to reservation for a second travel service, base on the traveler information and the travel duration information (Block ¶ 0052, ¶¶ 0067-0069); and*
- *an acquired information transmitting portion that transmits the first travel service information acquired by the first information acquisition portion and second travel service information acquired by the second information acquisition portion (Block ¶ 0052, ¶¶ 0067-0069).*

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the method of planning a trip with the technique of including a trip duration to aid in "trip planning and reservations" (Block ¶ 0048) and "complete the transaction" (Kendall ¶ 0044).

Claim 20:

Regarding the limitation:

- *a first request receiving step of receiving a page transmission request, which is a request to transmit a first travel service page, which is a web page relating to a stored first travel service and including a link to a travel service arrangement page, which is a web page relating to arrangement for reservation for a plurality of travel services including the first travel service;*

Block, in ¶¶ 0051-0052, ¶ 0069 disclose transmitting travel information transmission, but does not specifically disclose a link. However, Kendall, in at least ¶ 0044 discloses that referral links may be provided to complete travel information booking. It would have been obvious to combine the method of transmitting travel information with the technique of providing a link in order to aid in "trip planning and reservations" (Block ¶ 0048) and "complete the transaction" (Kendall ¶ 0044).

Block discloses the remaining limitations:

- *a first page transmitting step of transmitting the first travel service page if the page transmission request has been received* (Block ¶ 0052, ¶ 0069),
- *an acquisition request receiving step of receiving a request to acquire a first travel service information, which is information relating to reservation for the stored first travel service* (Block ¶ 0052, ¶ 0069); and
- *a first travel service information transmitting step of transmitting the first travel service information if the request to transmit the first travel service information has been received* (Block ¶ 0052, ¶ 0069).

Claim 21:

Block/Kendall, as shown, discloses the following limitation(s):

- *a user information receiving step of receiving traveler information, which is information relating to a traveler, and travel duration information, which is information relating to travel duration* (Block, ¶ 0052, ¶¶ 0067-0069, showing travel duration (see also Kendall ¶ 0030 showing duration); Block ¶ 0050, ¶¶ 0118-0119 showing traveler information (see also Kendall ¶ 0030 showing traveler information));
- *a first information acquisition step of acquiring first travel service information, which is information relating to reservation for a first travel service, based on the traveler information and the travel duration information* (Block ¶ 0052, ¶¶ 0067-0069);

- *a second information acquisition step of acquiring second travel service information, which is information relating to reservation for a second travel service, based on the traveler information and the travel duration information (Block ¶ 0052, ¶¶ 0067-0069); and*
- *a step of outputting the first travel service information and the second travel service information (Block ¶ 0052, ¶¶ 0067-0069).*

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the method of planning a trip with the technique of including a trip duration to aid in "trip planning and reservations" (Block ¶ 0048) and "complete the transaction" (Kendall ¶ 0044).

Claim 22:

Block/Kendall, as shown above, discloses the limitations of claim 21. Regarding the limitation:

- *an arrangement page transmitting step of transmitting a travel service arrangement page, which is a web page relating to arrangement for reservation for the first and second travel services, in response to a jump request based on a link to the travel service arrangement page that is included in a web page relating to the first travel service,*

Block, in ¶¶ 0051-0052, ¶ 0069 disclose transmitting travel information transmission, but does not specifically disclose a jump link. However, Kendall, in at least ¶ 0044 discloses that referral links may be provided to complete travel information booking. It would have been obvious to combine the method of transmitting travel information with the technique of providing a link in order to aid in "trip planning and reservations" (Block ¶ 0048) and "complete the transaction" (Kendall ¶ 0044).

Block discloses the remaining limitation:

- *wherein the traveler information and the travel duration information that have been received via the travel service arrangement page are received in the user information receiving step (Block ¶ 0052, ¶¶ 0067-0069 (see also Kendall ¶ 0030 showing duration); Block ¶ 0050).*

Claim 23:

Regarding the limitation:

- *a first request receiving step of receiving a page transmission request, which is a request to transmit a first travel service page including a link to a travel service arrangement page, which is a web page relating to a stored first travel service and relating to arrangement for reservation for a plurality of travel services including the first travel service;*

Block, in ¶¶ 0051-0052, ¶ 0069 disclose transmitting travel information transmission, but does not specifically disclose a link. However, Kendall, in at least ¶ 0044 discloses that referral links may be provided to complete travel information booking. It would have been obvious to combine the method of transmitting travel information with the technique of providing a link in order to aid in "trip planning and reservations" (Block ¶ 0048) and "complete the transaction" (Kendall ¶ 0044).

Block discloses the remaining limitations:

- *a first page transmitting step of transmitting the first travel service page if the page transmission request has been received (Block ¶ 0052, ¶ 0069);*
- *an acquisition request receiving step of receiving a request to acquire a first travel service information, which is information relating to reservation for the stored first travel service (Block ¶ 0052, ¶ 0069); and*
- *a first travel service information transmitting step of transmitting the first travel service information if the request to acquire the first travel service information has been received (Block ¶ 0052, ¶ 0069).*

Claim 24:

Block/Kendall, as shown, discloses the following limitation(s):

- *a user information receiving step of receiving traveler information, which is information relating to a traveler, and travel duration information, which is information relating to travel duration (Block, ¶ 0052, ¶¶ 0067-0069, showing travel duration (see also Kendall ¶ 0030 showing duration); Block ¶ 0050, ¶¶ 0118-0119 showing traveler information (see also Kendall ¶ 0030 showing traveler information);*

- *a first information acquisition step of acquiring a first travel service information, which is information relating to reservation for a first travel service, based on the traveler information and the travel duration information (Block ¶ 0052, ¶¶ 0067-0069); and*
- *a second information acquisition step of acquiring second travel service information, which is information relating to reservation for a second travel service, based on the traveler information and the travel duration information (Block ¶ 0052, ¶¶ 0067-0069).*

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the method of planning a trip with the technique of including a trip duration to aid in "trip planning and reservations" (Block ¶ 0048) and "complete the transaction" (Kendall ¶ 0044).

Claim 25:

Block/Kendall, as shown above, discloses the limitations of claim 24. Regarding the limitation:

- *wherein the program further lets the computer execute an arrangement page transmitting step of transmitting a travel service arrangement page, which is a web page relating to arrangement for reservation for the first and second travel services, in response to a jump instruction based on a link to the travel service arrangement page that is included in a web page relating to the first travel service, and*

Block, in ¶¶ 0051-0052, ¶ 0069 disclose transmitting travel information transmission, but does not specifically disclose a jump link. However, Kendall, in at least ¶ 0044 discloses that referral links may be provided to complete travel information booking. It would have been obvious to combine the method of transmitting travel information with the technique of providing a link in order to aid in "trip planning and reservations" (Block ¶ 0048) and "complete the transaction" (Kendall ¶ 0044).

wherein the traveler information and the travel duration information that have been received via the travel service arrangement page are received in the user information receiving step (Block ¶ 0052, ¶¶ 0067-0069 (see also Kendall ¶ 0030 showing duration); Block ¶ 0050).

16. Claims 4-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Block/Kendall in view of Daughtrey et al. (US 2004/0078252 A1).

Claims 4, 5:

Block/Kendall, as shown above, discloses the limitations of claim 1. In addition, Block also discloses the following limitation(s):

- *wherein the first travel service is a passenger transport service (Block ¶ 0052),*
- *wherein the first information storing portion of the first travel service server device stores, as the first travel service information, passenger transport reservation information relating to reservation for the passenger transport service, and wherein the first information acquisition portion comprises (Block ¶ 0052):*
- *a date deciding means that decides a departure date and/or return date from the travel duration information (Block ¶¶ 0067-0068); and*

Regarding the limitation:

- *a seat count deciding means that decides a seat count based on age information indicating the age of the traveler that is included in the traveler information;*

Block, in ¶ 0052, ¶¶ 0067-0068 discloses booking airline travel, Kendall, in at least ¶ 0030 discloses a number of travelers and an age of the travelers, but does not specifically disclose a seat count based on the age. However, Daughtrey, in ¶ 0032 and Fig. 2, discloses a seat count based on age ("Infants on lap under 2"). It would have been obvious to combine the method of making reservations with the technique including age and travelers because it would allow the user to specify the trip planned (Daughtrey ¶ 0032).

- *a passenger transport reservation information acquisition means that acquires the passenger transport reservation information from the first travel service server device, using the seat count, and the departure date and/or return date as keys (Block ¶¶ 0067—0068 showing dates; Daughtrey ¶ 0032).*

17. Claims 6-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Block/Kendall in view of Official Notice.

Claims 6, 7:

Block/Kendall, as shown above, discloses the limitations of claim 1. In addition, Block/Kendall also discloses the following limitation(s):

- *wherein the first travel service is a service providing a rental car* (Block ¶ 0069),
- *wherein the first information storing portion of the first travel service server device stores rental car information relating to reservation for the rental car as the first travel service information, and wherein the first information acquisition portion comprises* (Block ¶ 0069, ¶ 0050):

Regarding the limitations:

- *a car type deciding means that decides a car type to be reserved, based on the traveler information* (Block ¶ 0050, ¶ 0119);
- *a period deciding means that decides a period for which the rental car is to be rented, based on the travel duration information* (Block ¶ 0069); and

Block, in ¶ 0050, ¶ 0119 discloses making car rental preferences, and in ¶ 0069 discloses making a car rental reservation, but does not specifically disclose a car type or a duration of the car rental. However, the Examiner takes **Official Notice** that it is old and well known in the art that car rental preferences include car type and car rental reservations include a duration. It would have been obvious to combine the method of making a reservation with preferences with the technique of including car type and duration because it would aid the traveler in "trip planning and reservations" (Block ¶ 0048).

To adequately traverse the examiner's assertion of Official Notice, the Applicant must specifically point out the supposed errors in the Examiner's action, which would include stating why the noticed fact is not considered to be common knowledge or well-known in the art. A general allegation that the claims define a patentable invention without any reference to the Examiner's assertion of Official Notice would be inadequate. Support for the Applicant's assertion of should be included.

Block discloses the remaining limitation:

- *a rental car reservation information acquisition means that acquires the rental car information from the first travel service server device, using the car type and the period for which the rental car is to be rented as keys (Block ¶ 0069, 0119).*

Examiner notes that Block in ¶ 0052 and ¶ 0069 discloses a plurality of reservation types, and, accordingly, it would have been obvious to include multiple services (i.e. claim 6 directed towards first travel service, claim 7 directed towards second travel service).

18. Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Block/Kendall/Notice in view of Menendez (US 2007/0198311 A1) in view of SUV Rental Tips (Car Rental Express, "SUV Rental Tips – Children and Car Seats", accessed 1 April 2004, available at: http://web.archive.org/web/20040401155333/http://www.carentalexpress.com/tips/issues_with_children.html).

Claims 8:

Block/Kendall/Notice, as shown above, discloses the limitations of claim 6 or 7. Regarding the limitation:

- *wherein the traveler information includes age information relating to the age of the traveler, and wherein the second information acquisition portion comprises a child seat deciding means that decides the necessity or not of reserving a child seat, based on the age information.*

Block, in at least ¶ 0050 includes car rental preferences, but does not specifically disclose the necessity of a child seat. However, Menendez, in ¶¶ 0112-0113 discloses the availability of a child safety seat in a car rental preference. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include a child safety seat as taught by Menendez in the system of Block, since the claimed invention is merely a combination of old elements, and in the combination each element merely would have performed the same function as it did separately, and one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized that the results of the combination were predictable.

Block/Kendall/Menendez does not specifically disclose that the child safety seat is based on age information. However, SUV Rental Tips, in p.1, ¶ 1, discloses that rental companies determine the necessity of a child safety seat based on age. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the method of renting a child safety seat with the technique of renting the seat based on age because "car rental companies require children (who are under a certain age or weight) to be secured in a car seat" (SUV Rental Tips, p. 1, ¶ 1).

19. Claims 11-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Block/Kendall in view of Floss et al. (US 2002/0147619 A1).

Claims 11:

Block/Kendall, as shown above, discloses the limitations of claim 1. Regarding the limitation:

- *wherein the information acquired by the first information acquisition portion or the second information acquisition portion varies depending on the information in the first travel service server device that is included in the jump instruction from the information terminal.*

Kendall, in at least ¶ 0044 discloses a jump instruction, but does not disclose that the information can vary depending on information received. However, Floss, in at least ¶ 0048 and ¶ 0062 discloses receiving and filtering information depending on user preferences and input. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the method of making reservations with the technique of providing different information based on user input and preferences so that the reservation is "personalized for an individual or customized for a group of travelers" (Floss ¶ 0007).

Claims 12:

Block/Kendall, as shown above, discloses the limitations of claim 1. Regarding the limitation:

- *a region deciding portion that decides a travel destination region based on the information in the first travel service server device that is included in the jump instruction from the information*

terminal, wherein the information acquired by the first information acquisition portion or the second information acquisition portion varies depending on the region.

Kendall, in at least ¶ 0044 discloses a jump instruction, but does not disclose that the information can vary depending on information received. However, Floss, in at least ¶ 0048 and ¶ 0062 discloses receiving and filtering information depending on user region preferences. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the method of making reservations with the technique of providing different information based on user region preferences so that the reservation is "personalized for an individual or customized for a group of travelers" (Floss ¶ 0007).

Claims 13:

Block/Kendall, as shown above, discloses the limitations of claim 1. Regarding the limitation:

- *wherein it is judged whether a region relating to the first travel service server device and a region relating to the second travel service server device are the same region, and the information acquired by the first information acquisition portion or the second information acquisition portion differs between when the regions are the same and when the regions are not the same.*

Kendall, in at least ¶ 0044 discloses a jump instruction, but does not disclose that the information can vary depending on information received. However, Floss, in at least ¶ 0048 and ¶ 0062 discloses receiving and filtering information depending on user region preferences. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the method of making reservations with the technique of providing different information based on user region preferences so that the reservation is "personalized for an individual or customized for a group of travelers" (Floss ¶ 0007).

Claims 14:

Block/Kendall/Floss, as shown above, discloses the limitations of claim 1. In addition, Floss discloses the following limitations:

- *a region information acquisition portion that acquires, based on the region, information unique to the region, wherein the acquired information transmitting portion also transmits the information unique to the region* (Floss ¶ 0062; Fig. 8A).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the method of making reservations with the technique of providing different information based on user region preferences so that the reservation is "personalized for an individual or customized for a group of travelers" (Floss ¶ 0007).

Conclusion

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or concerning this communication or earlier communications from the Examiner should be directed to **Kevin H. Flynn** whose telephone number is **571.270.3108**. The Examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 9:30am-5:00pm. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, **John W. Hayes** can be reached at **571.272.6708**.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://portal.uspto.gov/external/portal/pair> <<http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at **866.217.9197** (toll-free).

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Alexandria, VA 22314.

/Kevin H. Flynn/
Examiner, Art Unit 3628
18 September 2009

/JOHN W HAYES/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3628